

A

LETTER TO A *Friend.*

Noble LORD

Occasion'd by the
Proceedings
AGAINST
Dr. Henry Sacheverell. K

By a *Hearty Lover of the Church, and
present Happy Constitution.*

*Justum & Tenacem Propositi Virum,
Non Civium ardor prava juvenum
Mente quatit solidam. Hor.*

L O N D O N:

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A

LETTER TO A NOBLE LORD,

Relating to the ~~proceedings~~ against

Dr. SAGHEVERELL.

My LORD,

i. **A**MONG all those Eminent Virtues, which Attract the Universal Love and Esteem of Men towards those in whom they shine with a more than Ordinary Lustre, I have often heard Your Lordship say, there was none more truly Excellent, or more rarely to be found

found at this time oth Day, than a firm and steady Adherence to the Unalterable Principles of True Religion and Loyalty.

2. And indeed *My Lord*, considering the many Violent Attacks from Interest, and your Shocking importunies of (perhaps,) a Man's dearest Friends and nearest Relations, with the Sophisticall Arguments of cunning Reasoners, that lie in wait to Deceive ; I am something apt to wonder, that we have so many Brave Spirits, and Clear Heads among us, who are both Resolute to maintain, and able to Discern the Truth, notwithstanding the Enticing Allurements, Affrighting Menaces, or smooth Reasonings of its most Violent and cunning Opposers.

3. At this time Especially, it requires more than Ordinary Courage, and steadiness of mind, to hold fast our Integrity ; When so much Devilish Industry is us'd, to set things in a false Light, and when there are not wanting, ev'n among

those whose proper Business and Profession it is to Direct us into the way of Truth, some *False Brethren*, who call *Evil Good, and Good Evil*, and make no Scruple from the very Pulpit to sound the Trumpet to *Rebellion.*

4. Yet notwithstanding all these Discouragements, Your Lordship has constantly remain'd a Noble Instance as well of a Discerning Judgment an unquenchable Zeal, and firm constancy to the Principles and Interest of that Church, which Your Lordship is so Throughly convinc'd to be the purest in Christendom; as of an Inviolable Loyalty to the Crown; which can never be Happy in a Better Subject.

5. And now there is again an Opportunity put into Your Lordships Hands of asserting the Primitive Doctrines of the Christian Church, of Vindicating the express Words of holy Writ, and those Expositions of 'em, which were the constant sense

sense of all the greatest Ornaments of our Church, from the Reformation to this very Day ; and of Declaring afresh the Abhorrence Your Lordship has always born to the Principles of Rebellion and Confusion. In short My Lord, the case of Dr. Sacheverell, which is now coming before Your Lordship in the H. of Peers, as it is of the greatest Importance, so it has fix'd the Eyes of all the Lovers of the Church upon your Lordship, it is in a great Measure from Your Lordships moving Eloquence, great Interests, and known Affection to Church and State, that they expect to meet with, the wish'd for Success.

6. I am not going to tire Your Lordship with a Long Detail of the Merits of the *Passive Obedience Cause*, which Your Lordship understands far better than I can ever pretend to do, neither am I entring upon a set Defense of Dr. Sacheverell in which it were the height of Vanity in me to expect to equal himself, and his Learn-

ed Counsel. I shall only beg leave to lay before Your Lordship in a loose Epistolary way, some Observations concerning this Prosecution and the late furious Controversy about the Doctrine of Non-Resistance, which I hope may conduce a little to the Opening the Eyes of some well-meaning People, who cannot see thro' the Specious Disguises of Designing Hypocrites.

7. And first as to the *time*. I Remember when the Occasional Bill was in Agitation, there were several Objections made against the passing it; at *that time*, and altho' I cannot think they had much Weight in 'em, *then*, yet I may safely Affirm that they may be now turn'd against the very party that first made 'em, and that with more than treble Force; If it was then so very unseasonable a time, for passing a Law to prevent the worst of Hypocrites coming into a share of the Government of the State; because her Majesty was known to be so good a Mother of the

Church;

Church ; as to render all Fears of its safety during her Administration Vain and unreasonable, if it was then an improper time to raise Heats and Jealousies in the Nation, because we were Embroyl'd in a War ; If these were Objections *then*, for God's sake are they not so still ? Is it now a seasonable time to Preach up Rebellion, and the Sovereign Power of the People, when we have so Excellent a Princess on the Throne, One who makes it her whole study to make all her People as Easy and Happy as possible under the mildest Administration. Is Her Majesty such a Tyrant and Oppressor of her Subjects, that She is by no means to be born with any Longer ! Or are they the Vilest of Ingrates ? *Poisonous Vipers* that would gnaw the Royal Bosom that warms them ; those I mean that Preach up Resistance ; who let their pretences be never so Specious, either have another *Common-Wealth* in View or else mean nothing at all, but of this more by and by.

Again, are we not *still* Engaged in a War ? And is it then a proper time to

olent Prosecutions, which 'tis always Remarkt serve only to heighten Party-Animosities? Is not this serving the Common Enemy with a Witness, who has hardly any hopes left but from our Divisions, and who I heartily Fear has more Emissaries among us then we are aware of, how else came so many of the Jesuitical Principles to be so lately reviv'd.

8. In answer to all this, they run us down with the Odious Names of *Jacobites*, *Perkinites*, &c. and obstinately maintain, that it is impossible for us to be well-Wishers to the present Establishment, except upon Resisting Principles. And this they lay down as a self-Evident Truth, and have continual recourse to it as to an Unanswerable Argument of the Justice of their cause. I shall therefore My Lord, beg Your Lordships Patience while I endeavour to prove in as few Words as possible the Falseness of this Aspersion upon us, and that there is much more Reason for the Pretender to hope for Assistance from their Principles than ours.

8. And

9. And first, I think I may venture to lay it Down for a certain Truth, that those may and ought to be suppos'd Friends to any Government who endeavour to fix its Title to Supreme Power upon the Best and surest Foundation, such as are the Laws of God, and the Fundamental and Ancient Constitution of the Nation where this Government is settled.

10. Secondly, I may also assert that those who endeavour to Undermine the Ancient and undoubted Title of any Prince in Order to substitute a new and more Precautions one, are to be suppos'd less heartily to Espouse his Title than the former.

11. These things premis'd, let us come now to the case in hand. We who are for *Passive Obedience*, found her Majesty's Title, upon the Ancient bottom of Hereditary Succession, and affirm that her Majesty is true and lawful Sovereign of these Kingdoms, as she is the first surviving Heir of the Line of the Stuarts whose Title to these

these Realms is undoubted, and we utterly Deny that there is any Person in the World who can claim an equal Right. We say also, that as our Constitution consists of King, Lords and Commons, (yet so that the King or Queen is supreme and independent,) they may jointly (in case the next Heir in the Right Line, be according to the Laws incapable of succeeding) devolve the Crown to the next in Blood that is capable; or rather that it does of it self Devolved to him or her, that is so Entitled. Now by our Laws, no Papist is capable of Succession; and therefore we acknowledge the Right of the *Hannover* Line as being the next capable; and so consequently, according to our own Principles think our selves bound to Espouse her Majesty's Title, and that of the House of *Hannover* after her Decease, without Heirs of her Body. And all this we say is highly consistent with the Doctrine of *Non-Resistance*, of which more perhaps by and by.

12. They on the Contrary, take no manner of Notice of Her Majesty's
Hereditary

Hereditary Right, but fix it all upon the Principles of Resistance, and that new-tangled Notion of the Power being necessarily inherent in the People, who say they,) may chuse their own Kings, say, and *Depose* 'em when they Please to say it is necessary for the Good of the Publick, that is, in plain *English*, when they think fit; for they are Judges in their own Cause, and no Appeal can ye from these Sovetaign Lords: The latter of which Notions is as bad *Law*, as the former is *Gospel*. Nay, since this controversy has been reviv'd with so much Heat, they have gone so far, as to assert in Publick Company's, the reality of a *Pr---e of Wales*, or Son to late King James, in order to make Her Majesty meerly their own Creature.

13. Judge now, *My L O R D*, which of these two Parties ought to be suppos'd best Friends to the prelent Establishment; those who maintain that it is agreeable to all our Ancient *Laws*, and *Constituti-*
ons,

ons, or those who derive it wholly from the *Good-Will* of the People. I think it is very clear that her Present Majesty's Title is best secur'd by *Old English* Principles; and I doubt not but your *Lordship* thinks so too.

14. If we may guess at these Mens Designs by the Natural Tendencies of their open and avow'd Principles, I am afraid we shall find 'em none of the Best. Their Preaching up *Resistance* at this time, and under so Happy an Establishment, is no great sign of their being the *best Friends* to it: This I am sure of, the *Pretender* can never come in without *Resistance* to the Government we are now under. Or perhaps 'tis a *Common Wealth* they aim it, and truly it looks very like such a Design when the very same Notions are so Industriously spread abroad, which brought King *Charles* to the Block. I can shew your *Lordship* Mr. *Hoadly's* Measures of Obedience in Print before he was Born, in very many of those *Seditious Pamphlets* that

Pay'd

lly Pav'd the way to the **Grand Rebellion** in
 l sorry one. Nay, the substance of that very
 Ma Sermon which the Author above-mention'd
 lish Preach'd on purpose to prove St. Paul a
 our Whigg, or in his own Words, *A Register of*
the Civil Magistrate, is now Extant in a
 Sermon Preach'd by Nye before the *House*
of Commons in 1643. We all know how
 Dismal the Consequences were of these
Hellish Doctrines. God grant we may ne-
 ver see and feel 'em again.

15. On the other side, my *L O R D*,
 what can reasonably be suppos'd to be the
 Design of those who utterly cry down all
Resistance and *Rebellion*; But to move all
 their Hearers and Readers to an inviolably
 Loyalty to Her Majesty? They Exhort
 all Men to *study to be quiet, and do their*
own Business, to Serve God and Honour the
Queen, and think themselves bound in
 Conscience to do all that lies in their Po-
 wer to maintain and secure the Present Go-
 vernment both in Church and State.

16. To

16. To that scandalous Asperion they so unjustly fling upon us, of maintaining under-hand by these Principles the Title of the *Pretender*; we Answer again and again, That we know no such Person. We know of none that has any *Lawful Pretensions* to the *Imperial Crown of Great-Britain and Ireland*. We never were satisfyed of the *Lawful Birth* of a Son of King *James* that is yet Alive, but believe it was a *Trick* and a *Sham* put upon us by designing *Jesuites*; and till they prove it to be otherwise, we shall continue to think so, and act accordingly. But it is usual with that Party to load those with heaps of *Scandal* and *Calumny*, whom they are not able to Answer with *solid Reasoning*. I am sure there never were more constant *Assertors of Non Resistance*, and more *Resolute Opposers of Popery* than the *Fellows of Magdalen College in Oxon*, (of which Society Dr. *Sacheverell* is still a *Member*) as appears beyond all Contradiction from the History of the Reign of the late King *James*.

17. And now, my *L O R D*, give me
leave

so leave to Observe one thing more, relating
to the severe Prosecution of Dr. Sacheverell,
and it is this, that those who are his great-
est Enemies and most violent Opposers,
are the very same Men who a few Years
ago cry'd up so much, *Moderation and For-
bearance*. They, Good Men! could not
hear a word of punishing Men for their
Opinions tho' never so Heterodox, and a
Bill for preventing the scandalous and ab-
ominable Practices of playing Fast and
Loose with God and all things Sacred ;
by Occasional Conforming, was to them at
that time, no less than Persecution. But
now the Tables are chang'd a little, who
more Furious than they ? The severest Pro-
ceedings Now they think are too Mild a-
gainst those who stand up for the Old
Principles ; and so indeed it always was
when they were *Uppermost*, and the Inhu-
man Treatment of poor Mr. Greenshield, and
the rest of the Episopcal Ministers in Scot-
land, shews that they know how to put off
the Lamb and resume the Lion, when it
serves their Turn. As for Dr. Sacheverell,
nothing

nothing will serve some of 'em but Roast-
ing him ; using the Expressi-
on of a Furious Zealot a-
gainst him , who is since Dead.

18. I wish some measure of this Heat
and Zeal were employ'd against those
Books which strike at the very Root of
Christianity ; such as the *Rights of the Church,*
&c. which are with so much Industry di-
spersed over the Nation ; and I humbly
conceive if some such Proposal were now
made, it would make 'em for Shame con-
sent to the Prosecution of those *Poisonous*
Authors , since they have been so Furious
against O N E, whose *Principles*, they them-
selves must needs own to be much less
Pernicious. I shall Trouble your *Lordship*
no longer at this time, than just to assure
your *Lordship* that none can be with more
Sincerity, than I am

Your Lordship's most Humble,

And most Obedient Servant.

F I N I S.